FSSAI License for Home-Based Food Business in India

Introduction

Over the last few years, the home food industry has been growing exponentially all across India. There are many new small businesses operated by entrepreneurs who produce food from their homes. Some examples of these home-based food projects are:

- Homemade Snacks
- Bakery
- Cloud Kitchen
- Catering
- Tiffin

Growth of social media and food delivery apps means that more consumers can purchase homemade foods across the country of India.

Irrespective of the fact that you operate a food business out of your home or not, as an owner of a food service, there will be various laws and regulations that apply to how safely food must be handled in order for your business to operate legally. The first thing you need to do is to get an FSSAI registration or license.

The FSSAI or (Food Safety and Standards Authority Of India) ensures that all food-related businesses in India meet minimum food safety and hygiene standards, therefore if the food you prepare/store/distribute/sell does not meet those minimum standards then you could be prosecuted.

This article will cover how to apply for FSSAI registration in India for your home-based food business. In particular, we will look at who can register, if there are any fees for registration, what types of documents are needed in order for your request to be processed, and how to complete your application.

What is an FSSAI License?

Before a business can sell food products in both wholesale and retail outlets, it must first obtain an FSSA (Food Safety Authority of India (FSSI)

license). This license allows the operation of food businesses within India, and compliance with all applicable FSAI regulations is strictly enforced.

All food business operators registered or licensed with FSSAI will be assigned a 14-digit FSSAI registration/license number that they must display in labeling for each food item sold by them and on all invoices issued to clients or customers for the sale of their food items. It is also mandatory that food business operators post the FSSAI registration/license number prominently in all business premises. An FSSAI registration or licence number indicates that the registered food business complies with all relevant food safety laws and standards.

FSSAI registration is generally applicable to home-based food businesses, even if such businesses are small in size.

Benefits of FSSAI Registration for Home Kitchens

There are multiple benefits to obtaining FSSAI registration for food businesses operating from home.

- To begin with, FSSAI registration gives you the legal right to operate your food business legally. Not having FSSAI registration means your company or business can be penalized or shut down.
- Secondly, having the FSSAI certification would help to create a sense of trust with potential customers. Most individuals would love to purchase their food from companies that have safe and sanitary practices.
- Thirdly, FSSAI registration gives you the ability to grow your business. Many major online food delivery businesses require their suppliers to have FSSAI registration and certification before they can work together.
- Fourthly, having FSSAI registration increases the legitimacy of your business. If you are an FSSAI registered cooking company, it adds professionalism and increases your credibility in the marketplace.
- Finally, FSSAI registration ensures that you operate your food business in compliance with the necessary hygiene standards for food

preparation, storage, and handling, which results in the highest possible quality of the products you offer.

Why Home-Based Food Businesses Need FSSAI Registration?

A lot of small entrepreneurs have the idea that FSSAI registration only applies to large restaurants or food manufacturers, however, this restriction does not apply as it applies to every single food business or shop operator, which includes all home-based sellers.

The following types of home-based businesses need an FSSAI registration:

- Home Bakers
- Tiffin Services
- Sellers of Homemade Snacks
- Home-Based Catering Services
- Online Food Retailers
- Cloud Kitchens Located in Residential Areas
- Sellers of Pickles, Jams, and Other Homemade Condiments

FSSAI Registration is still required if the business is small, is selling through social media, or has other contributing factors.

Registering properly provides protection against any legal issues and provides an easier path for future expansion of the business.

Types of FSSAI Licenses for Home-Based Food Businesses

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) issues three different licenses based on the volume of a food business.

Basic FSSAI Registration

The Basic Registration method is for small food businesses that are home-based (catering to an annual turnover limit of ₹12 lakh). Most people who begin a food business from home will fall into this category during the startup stage.

State FSSAI License

State licenses are issued to those businesses which have generated a turnover between ₹12 lakh and ₹20 crore. The State License method

applies to foods that are expanding through increased production/output or by building distribution networks.

Central FSSAI License

A food business that generates a turnover in excess of ₹20 crore or operates in more than one state should apply for a central license. Most large food manufacturers/exporters fall within this category.

FSSAI License Cost for Home-Based Food Businesses

FSSAI Registration Costs Vary by Type of License

The type of FSSAI registration/ license required will determine the associated costs.

Basic registrations will typically have very low government fees that are affordable for small businesses. State or central licenses have corresponding costs which are higher depending on the size and type of the business.

The total cost for obtaining your FSSAI registration will include all government fees, which can be thought of as the base cost for the registration process, plus any costs incurred from hiring a consultant to assist you with the registration process.

FSSAI registration is relatively inexpensive when you consider the legal protection and credibility provided by being registered.

FSSAI Operational Guidelines for Home Kitchen Operations

Food businesses based at home must implement safe food practices and adhere to required operating standards to promote safe food preparation and hygiene.

The regulations include having a clean kitchen, having appropriate, properly stocked locations to store any raw materials whether or not they will be used, using fresh and intact ingredients to make products that can be eaten, properly disposing of waste and having proper pest management techniques.

When preparing food for the consumer, food handlers have proper hygiene practices through having clean uniforms and only using utensils that have been sanitized.

When selling any food products (packaged) and registered, it is essential to have proper labeling and meet appropriate guidelines. Adhering to said guidelines will improve your customer's safety and decrease the chance of food contamination.

Eligibility for FSSAI License for Home-Based Food Businesses

If applying for a FSSAI licence to operate a home-based food business you must first qualify for said licence through an eligibility assessment process.

Applicants must either be preparing, manufacturing or selling food products. They also must have a permanent base of operations, which can be their home kitchen.

Applicants must comply with food safety laws and agree to follow hygiene practices laid out by authorities.

Even those who are operating part-time, from their homes, are eligible to apply for registration.

Documents Needed to Obtain an FSSAI Licence for Home Based Food Businesses

There are various types of documents that you need to include when submitting your application for the FSSAI licence.

The following are examples of common documents required during the licence application process:

1. An applicant's valid identification card or driver's licence
2. An applicant's proof of permanent address
3. An applicant's photograph (passport size)
4. Set of all documents showing proof of the business address
5. Declaration form (Must be signed and submitted by an applicant stating compliance with Food Safety Laws)
6. Details about all types of food that will be offered for sale.

For those applying for top tier licences (higher levels) as of October 2023, other documents such as business registration certificates and Food Safety Management Plans may be requested.

Accuracy when providing documentation can assist in obtaining timely approval.

Step-by-Step Process to Apply for FSSAI License for Home-Based Food Businesses

Applying for a FSSAI license is a step by step process.

Step 1: The first step is to find out which type of license you need based on your anticipated annual turnover – whether you will need a Basic Registration, a State License, or a Central License.

Step 2: After you have determined which type of license you will apply for, you need to go to the official website of the FSSAI at fssai.gov.in. The government has set up a web-based licensing service where applications are submitted online through this system. You can open an account with the FSSAI and submit your application information electronically.

Step 3: The application form itself will request the following information:

- Name of your business
- Type of food products being produced
- Address of your business
- Contact information, etc.

Step 4: Once the application form is filled in, the next step is to upload the necessary documents. The documents have to be uploaded as per the requirements specified in the application form.

Step 5: Once the application is completed and the necessary documents are attached, the next step is to make an online payment for the registration/ licensing fees fixed by the FSSAI.

Step 6: After you have completed your application and paid the required fees, your application will be forwarded for review to the appropriate food safety authority. In many cases, the food safety authority may even ask you

to allow an authorized representative of the authority to inspect your facility.

Step 7: When your application is approved, you will receive your FSSAI Registration Certificate, along with a 14-digit License Number. Your Registration Certificate will enable you to sell your food products.

Conclusion

There are numerous exhilarating advantages to launching a food company at home as an entrepreneur in India. The growing need for healthy homemade meals provides the food industry with substantial expansion opportunities. Your new food business will achieve success through its first essential step which requires you to check your compliance with local laws. The production facility needs FSSAI registration because it shows your food safety compliance and increases your business trustworthiness to new customers. The registration process for FSSAI certification offers a straightforward and budget-friendly option that small home-based cooking businesses can easily access. The hygiene practices you follow together with your FSSAI registration will establish solid foundations for your new business. You will likely realise long-lasting results with your food business.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. Do I have to get FSSAI registration to run a home-based food business?

All food manufacturers and storage facilities and food vendors must obtain FSSAI registration according to Indian food safety regulations that require all businesses to register with the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India.

2. Is it legal to operate a home-based food business in India?

You can legally operate a home-based food business in India as long as you adhere to food safety regulations and obtain the necessary FSSAI registrations.

3. What is the average time taken for obtaining an FSSAI registration?

FSSAI registration approval duration ranges between a few days and several weeks because it depends on the speed of Document Verification and the approval decision of the authorities.

4. What are the consequences of selling food before obtaining an FSSAI license?

Selling food without an FSSAI license will result in business closure through legal action and fines.

5. Am I allowed to sell home-cooked food online?

You can sell your homemade meals online through social media platforms and food delivery apps after you secure FSSAI registration and follow food safety regulations.